

Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-17

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 121124

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PN, US, PFOR

SUBJECT: PANAMA- U. S. RELATIONS

1. IN COURSE OF REVIEWING STATE OF BILATERAL RELATIONS AND TREATY NEGOTIATIONS WITH AMBASSADOR GONZALEZ REVILLA JUNE 21, COUNTRY DIRECTOR CONFIRMED WE HAD NOTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER TACK, COMPLYING WITH HIS COMMITMENT TO THE SECRETARY IN BUENOS AIRES, HAD REFRAINED FROM ADDRESSING HIMSELF TO CANAL ISSUE IN A PROVOCATIVE WAY IN HIS SPEECH TO " CONGRESS FOR SOVEREIGNTY AND PEACE" WHICH PANAMA HOSTED (PARAS 4 AND 5, PANAMA 3074), AND HAD NOTED ALSO THE RESTRAINED MANNER IN WHICH GOP HAD REACTED TO NEWSWEEK' S PUBLICATION OF DEAN ALLEGATIONS RESPECTING PANAMA. SUCH A POSTURE ON THE PART OF THE PANAMANIAN'S CONTRIBUTED TO DISPELLING THE CLIMATE CREATED BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING LAST MARCH. MOREOVER IT FACILITATED OUR ACTIVE STUDY OF THE TWO RECENT, INTERESTING COMMUNICATIONS FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON FUTURE TREATY NEGOTIATIONS. THE AMBASSADOR SAID HIS GOVERNMENT HOPES TO FIND OUR RESPONSE, " WHETHER IN WRITING OR OTHERWISE," ALSO " INTERESTING."

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2. EXPLAINING THAT HE PERSONALLY DESPAIRS OF ANY SETTLEMENT OF OUR DIFFERENCES THROUGH NEGOTIATION IN THE IMMEDIATELY FORESEEABLE FUTURE, AND PARTICULARLY PRIOR TO THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY NEXT JANUARY 9 OF THE 1964 RIOTS,

GONZALEZ SAID HE IS CONCENTRATING WITH THE SPECIFIC APPROVAL OF BOTH TACK AND TORRIJOS ON WHAT HE TERMED "INTERIM ADJUSTMENTS" IN THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PANAMA AND CANAL ZONE. HE IS TO RETURN TO PANAMA CITY JULY 6 FOR TWO WEEKS DEVOTED TO SEEKING FORMULAE WHEREBY PANAMA COULD "USE" OLD FRANCE FIELD AND A CRISTOBAL PIER.

3. COUNTRY DIRECTOR SAID WE WELCOMED THAT EFFORT SINCE, AS GOP HAD BEEN AWARE FOR SOME TIME, USG HAS BEEN FAVORABLY DISPOSED TO THE CONCEPT OF ADJUSTMENTS IN THE RELATIONSHIP WHICH COULD DIRECTLY AND INDIRECTLY CONTRIBUTE TO ACCELERATING THE PACE OF SETTling BASIC DIFFERENCES THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS. BUT HE CAUTIONED THAT THE ADJUSTMENTS ARE COMPLICATED BY LEGALITIES WHICH USG CANNOT IGNORE, THOUGH PANAMA SEEMS TO BELIEVE IT CAN, AND THAT WORKING THEM OUT WOULD NECESSITATE COMPROMISE ON PANAMA'S PART AS WELL AS ON USG'S. PANAMA COULD NOT STAND IMMOVABLY ON NATIONALISTIC PRIDE -- AS, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE MATTER OF REFUSING TO APPLY FOR CANAL ZONE LICENSES -- AND EXPECT TO ACCOMPLISH A GREAT DEAL IN THE WAY OF ADJUSTMENTS. POSSIBLY GOP COULD GET AROUND THAT PROBLEM BY ENTERING INTO ARRANGEMENTS PUBLICLY DENOMINATED AS BEING "PROVISIONAL PENDING CONCLUSION OF A SATISFACTORY NEW TREATY." GONZALEZ SAID HE BELIEVED THAT SORT OF LANGUAGE WOULD APPEAL TO TORRIJOS, "WHO REALLY NEEDS THE ADJUSTMENTS." ROGERS

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